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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ANKARA 002912

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/05/2013

TAGS: PREL MOPS MARR TU I2

SUBJECT: IRAQ: LETTERS FROM TGS CHOD OZKOK TO CJCS MYERS,  
CINCEUR JONES

REF: ANKARA 2906

(U) Classified by Political-Military Affairs Counselor Stuart Brown. Reasons: 1.5 (B and D).

¶11. (C) On May 5, 2003, the Embassy received copies of three letters from TGS CHOD Gen. Ozkok: (1) an April 30 letter to CJCS Gen. Myers (see para two for text), (2) a May 1 letter to CJCS Myers (see para three for text) and (3) a May 1 letter to SACEUR Gen Jones (see para four for text). The first letter to CJCS Myers in large part focuses on northern Iraq: it protests the treatment of the TU special forces in northern Iraq by US forces and seeks to explain and justify their presence. It also says the US and Turkey together can discuss the re-deployment of TU forces once PKK/KADEK is eliminated and the region is secure. The second letter to Gen. Myers (like the letter to SACEUR Jones) contains Turkey's offer to contribute to NATO-led operations in Iraq, and seeks NATO's support for use of a NATO HQs in Turkey for this purpose. Finally, para five contains the text of a memorandum of record of an April 28, 2003 meeting between Commander CJSOTF-N Col. Cleveland and Deputy Commander of TU SF in Silopi.

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OZKOK-MYERS: TU CONCERN ON IRAQ  
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¶12. (C) Begin text of letter from TGS CHOD Gen. Ozkok to CJCS Gen. Myers:

Dear General Myers,

The recent messages from the US Special Forces in northern Iraq are not encouraging. Hence, I would like to convey my views to you.

As is known, there have been limited Turkish troops in northern Iraq since 1997. This action was fully coordinated with the KDP and PUK. The main purpose of this limited troop deployment is to prevent any PKK/KADEK terrorist infiltration into Turkey as well as early warning and intelligence collection. There are almost 5,000 terrorists in the region, which pose a serious threat to Turkey.

For these reasons, we, together, can evaluate the Turkish military presence in northern Iraq after the PKK/KADEK existence is eliminated and full control is ensured in the region. As assured, this contingent does not have any negative impact on overall US operations. It is obvious that we can reach the desired end-state through bilateral talks on the basis of mutual understanding and objective criteria.

With this in mind, I think, the recent incident experienced in Kirkuk was exaggerated. Firstly, Gen. Osman's HQs was informed of this activity. Secondly, everybody tends to carry small arms in the region. The team composed of Turks, Kurds and Turkomans were not carrying any additional weaponry other than ones for their own security. When the convoy was stopped, others came to help settle the dispute. However, they were misinterpreted and sent back to Turkey for very well known reasons.

Turkish low profile attitude in this incident should be no means be taken as Turkish team was mal-practicing. On the contrary, as stated above, the importance that we attach to the Turkish-US relations has been the underlying factor in the Turkish approach. The misinterpretation and wrong assessments by the lower echelons should not be allowed to adversely influence our relations. In this context, I consider this kind of tense and subjective approaches unacceptable for both sides.

The ultimatum-like demands to be met in short time-frames may harm our friendly relations. We are not against each other. Nor are our military contingents in the region. I assume that such unfortunate statements are due to the sentiments of some officials who work under difficult conditions for a long time. The repetition of such statements creates a worrisome atmosphere.

For instance, the statements made by Col. Cleveland, 10th US Special Forces Group Com., during the 28 April meeting in Arbil were unacceptable. Particularly, making any reference to revenge what was done to Iraq Special Representative Mr. Khalilzad and Special Forces teams at Habur Gate is unquestionably beyond the capacity of such an officer.

As is known, some of the bodyguards of Mr. Khalilzad stayed in Iraq despite their written promises to return. And the Turkish officials at the border gate needed to consult their higher authorities, which definitely took time. During this process, Mr. Khalilzad and his associates were hosted by the Deputy Governor. Consequently, he and his team were allowed into Turkey after a short time.

Turning to the Special Forces issue, the authority to send such a unit to Iraq from Turkey rests with the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Although I don't have any power in the respect, I produced after talking to you some course of actions, which put the special forces under the scope of already politically accepted NILE teams. On the issue of their prolonged stay in N.Iraq, I told that we need to &think8, which reflects a kind of flexibility.

We previously made clear statements on the locations of our contingents in northern Iraq. A written notification was also made to ODC on 23 March 2003 clarifying the coordinates of the locations. Additionally, I personally informed Secretary Powell that the total number of Turkish soldiers is

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around 1500. The detailed documentation, which included the number of soldiers, main weaponry and combat vehicles, was also provided upon request.

I fear that minor misinterpretations and problems in the theatre be allowed to harm our overall relations. I believe that we need to do our best to solve this kind of problems in a constructive manner.

Our main purpose should be to prevent any deterioration in our relations. I believe, as soldiers, we still have an important role to play in this respect. In order to avoid similar incidents, what we need to do is to come together with military and civilian delegations and to talk about essential arrangements in N.Iraq. CENTCOM involvement should follow such initiative in the theatre.

As we have discussed previously, our activities should be transparent in order to avoid any misunderstanding. This is what I also want to reiterate for this moment. I am of the opinion that, ultimatum-like statements, sudden and unexpected requests are not constructive at all in promoting our bilateral relations.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere wish that the recent developments would not create a difficult environment for our bilateral relations. With this in mind, I would like to re-emphasize my firm belief that mutual understanding and cooperation can overcome any possible hurdles we may face. Hence, we must not let past events dominate the future relations. We stand ready for any talks and cooperation in this direction, including possible Turkish contribution to reconstruction phase of Iraq as well as the establishment of Stabilization Force.

You may rest assured that I will continue to do my best to promote our bilateral military relations.

Sincerely,

CC: General James L. Jones.

end text.

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TURKEY OFFERS TO PLAY IN NATO-LED OPS IN IRAQ  
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**13.** (C) Begin text of a letter dated May 1 from TGS CHOD Ozkok to CJCS MYERS:

Dear General Myers,

We are pleased that the war in Iraq, which is likely to have far-reaching implications both in political and military terms on a wider region, did not last long as a result of rapid progress of the Coalition forces.

It is inevitable, however, that the post-war period in Iraq would bring new and demanding challenges. This would certainly necessitate intensified, unified and coordinated effort by the international community, in which NATO could and should play a much-needed role, particularly in re-establishing durable safety, security and stability in this war-stricken country. Needless to say, NATO, with its broad experience, is unquestionably capable of undertaking such a crucial and historic role. As a neighboring country to Iraq that could serve as a proper line of communication, Turkey stands ready to take part in such an operation of NATO Council decides to.

Turkey, while enjoying advantages of its geo-strategically unique location, inevitably remains exposed to many regional tensions and crises around its borders. In the face of the unfolding circumstances in the region, we believe NATO headquarters in Turkey would gain even more importance in view of handling these potential crises as well as safeguarding and consolidating collective peace and stability throughout the NATO's expanding area of concern.

I would like to thank you for your firm support and co-operation in the Operation Display Deterrence, initiated within the framework of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to deter any possible hostile attempt by Iraq and reinforce Turkey's self-defense. We are very pleased that the operation has been conducted successfully with all its assigned objectives accomplished.

I believe that the Operation Display Deterrence was also meaningful in proving and manifesting the solidarity within the Alliance as well as NATO's increasing importance, as a deterrent military organization, both on regional and global scale.

Taking this opportunity, both personally and on behalf of the members of the Turkish Armed Forces, I would like to extend my congratulations for the "Armed Forces Day" to you and to the members of the friendly and allied USA Armed Forces. I wish health and success to you all.

Sincerely,

end text.

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OZKOK-JONES LETTER  
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**14.** (C) Begin text of a letter dated May 1 from TGS CHOD Ozkok to SACEUR Jones:

Dear General Jones,

The last few weeks have witnessed a new hot crisis in the Middle East, which is most likely to have far-reaching implications, both in political and military terms, on a wider region stretching far beyond the Iraqi borders. Although it is early to contemplate a fully safe environment, it is apparent that Iraq is now almost under the military control of the Coalition troops. This, the level of threat

posed by Iraq against Turkey has diminished to an all-time low.

It is inevitable, however, that the post-war period in Iraq would bring new and demanding challenges to be addressed urgently. This would certainly necessitate intensified, unified and coordinated effort by the international community, in which NATO could and should play a much-needed role, particularly in re-establishing durable safety, security and stability in this war-stricken country. Needless to say, NATO, with its broad experience, is unquestionably capable of undertaking such a crucial and historic role. As a neighboring country to Iraq that could serve as a proper line of communication, Turkey stands ready to take part in such an operation of NATO Council decides to.

Turkey, while enjoying advantages of its geo-strategically unique location, inevitably remains exposed to many regional tensions and crises around its borders. Additionally, the ongoing developments in Iraq have the potential to trigger off new crises. In the face of the unfolding circumstances in the region, we believe NATO headquarters in Turkey would gain even more importance in view of handling these potential crises as well as safeguarding and consolidating collective peace and stability throughout the NATO's expanding area of concern.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank you for your firm support and co-operation in the Operation Display Deterrence, initiated within the framework of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to deter any possible hostile attempt by Iraq and reinforce Turkey's self-defense. We are very pleased that the operation has been conducted successfully with all its assigned objectives accomplished.

I believe that the Operation Display Deterrence was also meaningful in proving and manifesting the solidarity within the Alliance as well as NATO's increasing importance, as a deterrent military organization, both on regional and global scale.

Sincerely,

end text.

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Turkish Special Forces Operations in Northern Iraq

15. (C) Begin text of the memorandum for the record of a meeting between Col. Cleveland and TU SF Deputy Commander in Silopi:

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Turkish Special Forces Operations in Northern Iraq

11. COL Charles Cleveland, Commander CJSOTF-N, met COL Hasan Ozdemir, Deputy Commander, Turkish Special Force Operations Base-Silopi, TU on 280715Z April 2003. Also present were LTC Paul Skvarka, USSF, MAJ David Young, USSF, LTC Yasir Yildiz, TUSF, 1LT Murat Taner Karabulut, TUSF. The purpose of the meeting was to relay instructions from the Commander of the Combined Forces Command concerning the Turkish military activities in Northern Iraq to the senior officer responsible for Turkish Special Forces (TUSF) in Northern Iraq.

12. TUSF representative was informed of the following:

a. Turkish military personnel will immediately terminate all non Coalition-approved activities in Northern Iraq.

b. Turkish General Staff is required to notify the Combined Forces Command of the number of personnel, location and activities, to include intelligence gathering, of all Turkish military units and organizations in Northern Iraq. This information will be submitted NLT 300600Z April 2003.

c. No future Turkish military activities in Northern Iraq will be concluded unless approved by Combined Forces Command

through the JSOTF-N.

d. Turkish military personnel in Northern Iraq will only carry personal side arms (pistols).

e. Turkish military personnel in Northern Iraq will be in uniform at all times.

f. TUSF personnel already expelled from Northern Iraq will not be allowed to return. All violators will be detained.

g. Turkish military personnel will not escort aid convoys into Iraq. All humanitarian aid emanating from the Republic of Turkey will be coordinated through the International Red Cross/Red Crescent.

h. The previously accepted &Green Line8 border is no longer a recognized boundary and U.S. Forces in Northern Iraq are responsible for all activities in that region.

i. The above are initial and there may be follow-on instructions in the future.

j. COL Hasan Ozdemir, by signing this document, acknowledges receipt of the instructions to be relayed to the Turkish General Staff.

Charles T. Cleveland  
COL, SF  
Commanding

Hasan Ozdemir  
COL, TUSF

end text.  
PEARSON